

Polish
Exhibition
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BOMBAY 1944

INTRODUCTION

The war has brought to India nearly 5,000 Poles, mostly women and children, torn from their homes and families, and who after long and distressful wanderings in the U.S.S.R. have at last found rest and temporary refuge in this traditional land of hospitality.

Many of their fathers and brothers are now fighting shoulder to shoulder with the Allies as the Polish Army is engaged in action in Europe to bring freedom to Poland and all the subjugated countries.

The recent developments in the military and political situation in Europe have attracted the attention of the world to the fate of Poland ; many who know very little about this far off country ask different questions and would like to have some reliable information apart from all the misrepresentations of propaganda. That is why a group of Polish citizens residing now in India regards it as their duty to show to the Indian public something of true Poland, during her independence as well as her recent captivity.

Here we have no suitable books dealing with the geography and history of Poland, no statistical records, no artists or films that could adequately demonstrate the political, economic and cultural significance of Poland and the rôle Poland can play in Europe.

But we have tried to assemble all we could and show in charts, photos, and drawings, as well as in arts and crafts something of Poland, hoping our exhibits may create a deeper interest in our beautiful country and inspire some at least to further study.

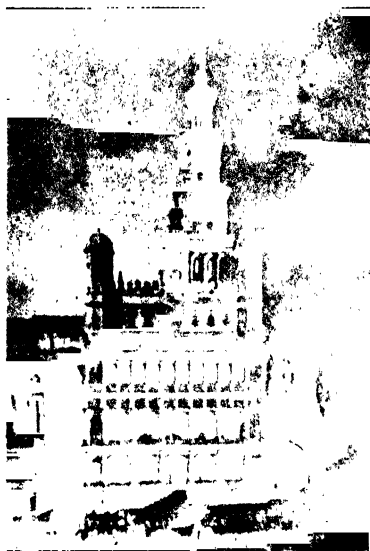
We want to show our guests :

- 1) How quickly our country rose and reconstructed itself after a bondage of nearly 120 years,
- 2) What is Poland's part in this war,
- 3) What is Poland's contribution to the world's culture,
- 4) How beautiful are Poland's folk-music and dances.

Concerts, lectures and dance performances may help to create this interest and dispel ignorance or misrepresentation of Polish life and culture, of her place in Europe and in the world.



The Royal Castle
Wawel in Cracow



The Town Hall of
Poznan



GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT POLAND

Poland is in the centre of Europe; its capital, Warsaw, almost mathematically so. The immediate neighbours of Poland are the two biggest military Powers of the Continent—Germany in the West, Russia in the East. The natural frontiers of Poland are the Carpathian range (its highest part is known as the Tatra mountains, the highest in Europe after the Alps), and a short Baltic shore—in the North. The length of the Polish frontiers is 3,467 miles.

As regards area (150,041 sq. miles) and population (35 millions), Poland ranks sixth in Europe. Warsaw is the 7th biggest European city. Poland is inhabited by 70% of Poles, 15% Ukrainians, 8·4% Jews, 2·5% White Ruthenians, 0·5% Lithuanians, and 0·25% Russians. About eight million Poles lived abroad before the war; four-and-a-half million in the U.S.A. When the U.S.A. entered the war, every sixth soldier was of Polish extraction. Poland's increase in population was (after Bulgaria) the highest in Europe.

Poland is one of the oldest and most cultured of the Slavonic States. During several centuries it was also the most powerful, and spiritually it remained one of the strongest till now, as the unequal fight, begun in 1939, and still continuing with unabated energy, has amply proved.

Poland, since the 12th century, had had to stand against the repeated onslaughts of the Tartars and Turks, protecting all Europe on the East; hence the title given her of "Rampart of Christianity." On the West she had had to wage defensive wars to protect her own existence, and that of Slavdom, from the steady and powerful pressure of Germany. Poland's victories in the 15th century saved all the Slavonic nations from German slavery.

Poland was, from the 14th century onwards, a constitutional monarchy. After the 16th century the King became a kind of elected President; the ruling class of the gentry was the largest in Europe, the percentage of voters—10%—was larger in Poland in the 16th century than in France in the 18th century. Democracy was in the blood of the Poles. The "constitutional principles"—personal security, security

"Ever true to her faith and to her word, Poland never undertook a war of conquest, but has struggled always for the liberty of peoples and for European civilisation."

LATE CARDINAL MERCIER
Primate of Belgium

of home and property, freedom of association, faith, speech, press, opinions—were introduced in Poland in the 15th and 16th centuries, and were never transgressed during her independent existence.

Poland was the only country in Europe which never had any religious war, where not a single creed or sect has ever been persecuted, from time immemorial till to-day. The Jews, at the time of atrocious persecution in Europe, flocked to Poland, where they enjoyed the largest measure of self-government. The Armenians, Protestants, and Greek Orthodox had always the same freedom till our days.

The first University was opened in Cracow in 1364—the second in Central Europe; the famous Copernicus was a scholar in this University. The next was the University of Wilno.

The parliamentary system was organised in the 15th century, the Constitution "Nihil Novi" was one of the most liberal of its times, and the next one of May 3rd 1791 was the most democratic. The King could do little without the consent of the Assembly—the House of Commons—composed of Deputies elected by universal suffrage, and the Senate. The deliberations of the Assembly were open and taken unanimously. Poland had no era of absolutism or feudal system in her history; her weakness was to have the Central Government not strong enough, and too much, not too little, of democracy. The King was the first citizen of the Republic but never an autocrat. Poland did not know what conspiracy against the King meant. The civil liberties enjoyed by the citizens were greater, in the 15th and 16th centuries, in Poland than in the neighbouring countries in the 18th and 19th. They were liked by Poland's smaller neighbours; that is why Poland did not grow through aggressive wars, of which her history had none, but by free and voluntary

“Even a great nation may fall ; but only a worthless one can perish !”

STANISLAW STASZIC.

Famous Polish Thinker of the 18th Century

Unions—with Lithuania, Ruthenia, Duchy of Livonia, etc. Poland was in reality a Commonwealth, a federated Republic.

Economically Poland was strong and wealthy and was called the “granary of Europe.” After the fall of the Byzantine Empire, the Western merchants carried on their trade with Asia through Poland. At the end of the 16th century, Poland was the largest country in Europe.

Beginning with the 14th century, for 300 years the Turks were the greatest menace to Europe. Poland had continually to repulse their invasions. Finally, at the request of the Pope and the Emperor of Austria, the Polish King Sobieski went to the rescue and defeated them, breaking their power near Vienna in 1683. Other wars against the aggressive armies of the Swedes and Moscovites weakened Poland in the 17th and 18th centuries and, with some decline in public morality, made possible the foreign interferences in her affairs, the more so because she was unwilling to maintain large standing armies. Poland’s liberties were regarded as dangerous by her autocratic neighbours. As the Chancellor of the Russian Empress, Catherine, said in 1794: “The opinions and institutions of Poles are contagious, the infection may easily spread,” and this was dreaded by the growing imperialism of those countries. That was the reason of their attempt to introduce chaos in Poland, and to overpower her by the force of three armies. Poland was defeated in her first defence, organised by Pulaski, the future hero of the American war of liberation ; and a great part of her land was annexed by the victors. It was a tremendous shock and tragedy for the nation and stupendous internal reforms began. The first Ministry of Public Education in the world was created (1773)—the army reorganised, and a new Constitution voted, establishing the foundation of quite modern democratic principles. But this was even more resented and dreaded by the autocracies, and a second invasion and annexation of the

"Poland . . . will rise again like a rock, which may for a spell be submerged by a tidal wave, but remains a rock."

WINSTON CHURCHILL

October, 1939.

territory took place ; it was valiantly opposed by a large volunteer army, in which a considerable number of peasants and workmen took part, a thing quite new in Europe, and the lead of a heroic General Kosciuszko who also fought for the freedom of America. After several successful battles, and the famous siege of Warsaw, Kosciuszko was defeated in 1794 by the three armies of Russia, Germany and Austria and the rest of Poland was invaded and divided by the aggressor Powers. Poland disappeared from the map of Europe, but not from its cultural, scientific, artistic and spiritual life. On the contrary all these aspects of her soul rose to unprecedented heights. Patriotism became her religion, but it touched a universal love for the freedom and brotherhood of mankind, for which she was struggling and striving during the following centuries.

Three times the Poles rose in arms against the oppressors, not without momentary successes (in 1862 an underground National Government ruled for one year, in the fully occupied country, imposing taxes, having different ministries, a guerilla army, etc.), but they could not stand in spite of all their gallantry and heroism against the military force of the Great Powers.

In those times of unprecedented national tragedy, a group of the most eminent poets, thinkers, philosophers and artists, appeared in Poland bringing a great contribution to the culture of mankind—Chopin; Hoene-Wronski, scientist and philosopher recognised as having no equal since Kant in Europe, and several other original and deep philosophers ; and three geniuses in poetry and spiritual vision, Mickiewicz the greatest of all Slavonic poets, Slowacki likened to Shelley and Blake in one person, and Krasinski whose dramas were so much in advance of his age that they are quite "modern"

“During the last years the heroic and determined manner in which the Polish people have struggled and sacrificed in the face of tremendous hardships and deprivation has been an inspiration not only to the people of the United States but to liberty-loving people everywhere.”

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

JULY 5, 1941.

even now. There was also a large group of less gigantic figures in poetry.

In spiritual and cultural life there was an astonishing revival of a nation which, deprived of her physical existence, had, as it were, to prove this birthright, and wage a formidable fight with fate itself, a ‘to be or not to be’ struggle, to regain one day her liberty and her right place in the family of nations.

No persecution, no oppression, no devilish methods used to force Poland to denationalisation, no attempts to kill her body and soul, have succeeded. The vitality and moral power of the race have proved stronger than all the crude and brutal powers used to crush it. A British historian has said : “The partition of Poland, although remote and indirect, was the essential cause of the World War ; it overthrew European equilibrium, introduced the victory of violence and the principle ‘*Might is Right.*’ Europe had to pay dearly for her indifference to the act of political gangsterism, as the power of Prussia and its militarism grew out of Poland’s partitions.”

Poland regained her freedom after a long preparation of her military force in youth organisations, which formed in 1914 the Legions of Pilsudski, who was one of the greatest men of Poland. It was he who helped her to regain her independence and organise her life. It was the will to be free and a tremendous effort of the nation that were chiefly responsible for Poland’s freedom in 1918 ; without this will and effort no outward agent could have brought liberation.

The whole history of Poland proves what a tremendous power the moral and spiritual strength and passion for freedom are. A nation that has a will to live and to fulfil her mission to Humanity cannot be subjugated for long.

"Habitual historic cruelties practised by the German nation upon the Polish nation cannot be exaggerated and need only be recalled as another Polish claim to restoration and amends. Powerful, completely independent Poland, with wide and easy access to the sea through her own territory, is a European necessity and European commitment."

LORD VANSITTART
September, 1943.

Poland's firm stand against Hitler's demand, her challenge of his, until then unopposed might, had also its source in the deepest belief of the whole nation, that moral values—like honour and liberty—cannot be sold for any material goods—safety, neutrality, avoidance of suffering, or even well-being.

And Poland proves it by her unabated, stubborn, grim fight against the Nazis, as well at home—where an Underground Army is half a million strong—as abroad, where Polish air-men (12,000 of them) are most gallantly fighting at the side of the Allies, and have till now destroyed 700 and damaged 900 aircraft; where her Navy is valiantly helping on all the seas, and her Army, the fifth in number amongst the Allies, is taking now an active part in the offensive against the "European fortress" of Hitler.

Poland's rightful and constitutional Government, residing for the time being in Britain, is representative of the chief political parties of Poland; it has 3 peasant and 3 socialist representatives; it is in constant touch with the invaded land, and has its representative in Poland itself, under whose command the Underground Army is fighting; the underground educational activities are going on and plans for the future are being prepared. Not even for one moment have the Poles doubted that the full integrity and independence of their country will be restored after the war.

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF FREE POLAND 1918—1939

The Armistice of 11th November, which brought peace to the rest of Europe, was for Poland the beginning of a military and diplomatic struggle for her frontiers. The Polish-Soviet Peace Treaty at Riga, March 21st 1921, and its ratification by the Conference of Ambassadors in March 1923, settling the eastern borders of Poland, have opened a new era for the country, that of the rebuilding and reorganisation of all life.

Devastated by six years of war, exhausted, ruined, with her economic, agricultural and administrative system completely disorganised, Poland faced tasks of such magnitude that they would have baffled any nation ; and we do not think any other could have done better in a shorter period of time than Poland has done. To understand the extent of the effort, to see rightly her achievements, one must bear in mind some facts.

1. Five-sixths of Poland's land were devastated by war operations, more seriously than Belgium and France. (The loss in buildings was estimated at 330 million dollars in gold, yet no reparations were allotted.)

2. Agriculture ruined : 11 million acres of land out of use ; 15 million acres of forest destroyed.

3. Industries at a complete standstill (machinery, and all other equipment taken by one or the other of the retreating occupants). The total loss of industries has been estimated at 10,000 million gold francs.

4. The monetary system profoundly disorganised : 6 different currencies in circulation, and a menace of inflation, which was soon to become a fact and to influence the next years of national economy.

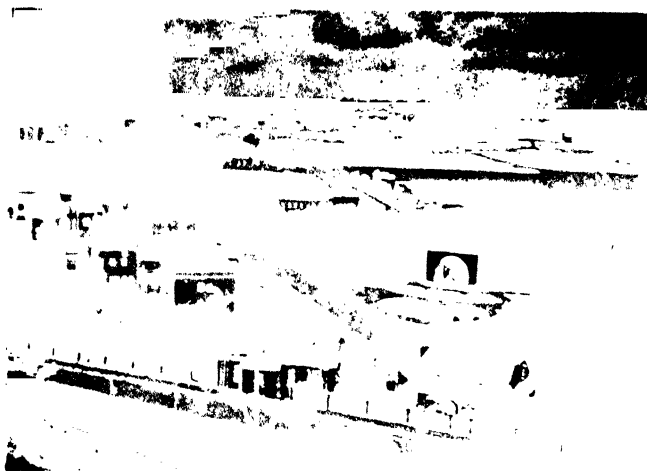
5. Four different systems of administration, all greatly disorganised ; four Codes of Law ; no Constitution.

6. Chaos in education (except in the part formerly under Austria) ; 34% illiteracy in the villages of Poland ruled by Russia ; not one Polish University or Academy (except Cracow and Lwow).

7. Physical and nervous exhaustion from six years of privation, misery, persecutions and war shocks ; 20% of



Polish Shore in 1918



**The same Sea Shore in 1929
with the town and port of Gdynia**

children rickety or consumptive from lack of nourishment; unimaginable impoverishment of all classes (626,000 destitute people on State support, 750,000 orphans, 2 million unemployed).

8. The Army nearly non-existent ; the Pilsudski Legions disorganised by German prisons and concentration camps ; the troops organised in France not yet returned ; soldiers from the three armies just coming home ; no equipment, almost no arms or ammunition ; no police force.

In these conditions the existence of the reborn Polish State began. One can imagine what a tremendous amount of energy, skill, effort, self-sacrifice, goodwill and patriotism were needed to cope with the task. The Poles rose to the occasion.

In less than six months the Army was organised, and was strong enough to repulse the enemy from the frontiers.

The Constitution, voted by the Legislative Assembly, founded on the "freest and most democratic franchise possible," as an American observer has remarked, granted to all citizens, without difference of nationality, class or creed, full liberty of culture, religion, customs, and opinions. It introduced compulsory education, and general military service, to protect the country.

A Polish currency was introduced. A unified Code of Law was established, after extensive work by the best lawyers. The administration was completely reorganised ; agriculture, trade and industry revived, developing with astonishing speed ; the new Port of Gdynia was built, a poor fishing village changing in a few years into the most modern port on the Baltic Sea. A hitherto non-existent Merchant Marine, Navy and Air Fleet were created, more and more Polish products and manufactures were exported and appreciated in other countries. Every part of the economic and industrial life was renewed and reconstructed. The Central Industrial District was organised on an imposing scale.

Some figures will give an idea of the development of the country :

Mining—Poland occupied the second place in Europe in coal production which was the chief article of export ;



**Modern
Architecture**

**National
Museum in
Warsaw**



**Modern
Architecture**
**Ministry of Edu-
cation in Warsaw**



the third place in oil production.

Salt—Her rock and brine salts mines were also among the oldest and richest in Europe. In potassium salt Poland's production was the third in Europe.

Metal—Her metal industry had considerably developed; in the production of pig-iron Poland occupied the ninth place, and in the production of steel the eighth.

Textiles—The textile industry, almost entirely destroyed by the 1914-18 war, was restored and splendidly developed, chiefly in Lodz, the "Polish Manchester"—and its products were exported to England, China, Switzerland, India, etc. The chemical industry was also developed, with a considerable export trade.

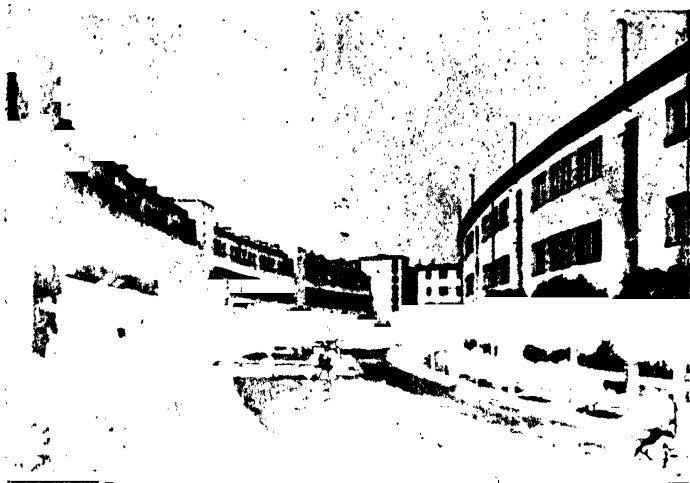
Agriculture—Poland also exported timber and many agricultural products like butter, eggs, bacon, wheat, flax etc.

Glass—Polish glassware was exported to 55 countries; paper to 10 countries.

Heavy Industries—In heavy industries, Poland exported railway engines, cars, and bars, to the Balkans and the Middle East. Eighty per cent of Polish imports and exports passed through the Ports of Gdynia and Danzig. Their respective development is seen on the charts.

Communications—Warsaw is on the communication lines from North to South, and East to West Europe. The lines of railway communications were doubled, the Polish air line, and the shipping line "Gdynia—America" founded, which had communication with 40 ports of the world.

Education was most vigorously fostered, from the first moment of independence. Fifteen per cent of the yearly budget was reserved for it. In the year 1937, 28 universities and academic schools were working; 72 teachers' training schools; 2,230 secondary, 1,030 special, 28,751 primary, and 1,651 nursery schools. Five and a half million Polish pupils were studying in 1937-39, over 50,000 of them in universities, and over one and a half million from the minorities, which had schools of their own, mostly supported by the Government. Ukrainians had 26 secondary Government Schools and many private ones, 8 teachers' training colleges, 4 commercial schools, 33 nursery and 457 primary schools in the Ukrainian lan-



Workers' Houses in Warsaw

guage, 2,754 primary bilingual schools, and in 2,123 others the Ukrainian language was an additional subject. They had a Theological Academy in Lwow, a Department of Orthodox Theology at the University of Warsaw, 5 Ukrainian Chairs at each of the universities, and many professional and technical schools. The Ukrainian cultural, scientific, social, professional and economic institutions developed swiftly, many of them assisted by the Government.

The Jews had 12 nursery, 87 primary, 2 secondary, and 14 commercial schools with the Yiddish language as the medium of instruction ; 29 nursery, 172 primary, 9 secondary and 3 teachers' colleges with Hebrew.

Illiteracy had fallen from 34 to 27 per cent in 1929, and was almost non-existent in 1938 : scientific and cultural institutions were developing splendidly in all the chief cities. In 1938 there were about 190 big scientific libraries ; innumerable were the smaller literary libraries, for Poles of all classes. Big new institutions were established, like the Radium Institute, founded by Mme. Curie-Sklodowska ; the marvellously endowed Physics Institute (both taken now to Germany with all their installations), the Institute of Research in East European Problems, the Institute for the Investigation of National Social Problems, the Institutes of Social Economy, of Rural Sociology, of Rural Culture, etc., etc. The chief Minorities of Poland had their own prospering scientific institutions : the Ukrainian Scientific Institute in Warsaw, supported by the Polish Treasury ; the Jewish Scientific Institute, and the Jewish Society for Culture and Science. Museums were opened ; about 180 scientific and academic museums, and 90 art galleries were started.

The Academy of Polish Literature was founded in 1933, and was doing, with the Polish P. E. N. Club, much good work. Literature, already rich, was continually vivified by new original and virile talent, a large part of which was feminine. Dramatic art flourished, and its standard was regarded by foreign critics as amongst the highest in Europe. Warsaw alone had thirteen permanent theatres and three schools of dramatic art and the Minorities had their own theatres supported by public funds.

The plastic arts, sculpture and architecture, as well as music, were rich in fresh and outstanding talents. One may say that every field of Poland's life was blossoming, and pulsing with creative life.

The prisons were reformed—industrial training, art, lectures and concerts were introduced. Courts for juveniles, and special clubs and schools for them, were established. Hundreds of health and physical culture centres were started, as well as hospitals ; mortality gradually decreased, health and vigour improved greatly throughout the country.

In the domain of social reform much has been achieved. Poland was one of the first in Europe to introduce, by legislation, not only the 8-hour day and paid yearly vacations, but also the progressive protection of women and juvenile labour with a post of woman inspector in the Ministry of Labour. Well-organised social insurance schemes, under which no one unemployed, of the manual or intellectual working class, was without permanent help, were started. Social Aid took care of disabled youths and adults and of the poor and destitute, combating begging, prostitution, etc. Warsaw's Women Police, under the lead of a prominent, spiritually minded woman, was found the best in Europe by a League of Nations Delegate.

Co-operative Societies as well as Trade Unions developed vigorously in towns and villages. Agrarian reform was introduced and carried on by an evolutionary method, the principle of private property being safeguarded. In accordance with the Land Reform Act, six and a half million acres were parcelled out among the landless peasants, some six hundred thousand new farms being created.

But the most remarkable results were achieved in the education of the masses. Original methods were introduced in the night schools, rural universities were started for peasants (the best in Europe after Sweden and Denmark), and universities for workmen in the towns ; posts of Cultural Instructors were created, helping the youth of the villages to organize and to develop freely, under their own initiative, social study-groups clubs, amateur theatres, sports, etc.

When one of our educational workers was sent abroad by the Ministry to study the corresponding institutions in other

countries, she visited nearly the whole of Europe, and found only in the then socialistic Spain and democratic Sweden the same fresh, vigorous breath of new ideas, of a new approach to the masses, based on reverence for human dignity, and confidence in the unlimited potentialities of every individual, irrespective of class and social status. Educational institutions breathing this new spirit were of tremendous value to the life of Poland. A new type of a free, nationally conscious, responsible, idealistic young citizen was developing, with a keen sense of national solidarity, proud patriotism, and at the same time interest in world affairs. It is this youth, together with the best Polish intellectuals, that is now upholding Polish honour and leading their countrymen in an unabated struggle against the Nazis.

The most interesting achievements were seen in the artistic domain. Not only has a new generation of writers, poets and novelists, from the peasant and working-classes, been born, enriching with accents of peculiar vigour and robust individuality the already rich Polish literature, but the dramas and representations used as a method of development in schools, cultural and educational institutions, and village-clubs, have proved to be the best for the Polish temperament.

The spiritual task before Poland has been best defined by one of her greatest men, Marshal Pilsudski : "We have to create a new type of man, a free yet self-disciplined idealistic citizen who could harmonise in himself the two extremes, robust independent individuality and conscious voluntary submission and co-operation with the State in full and creative responsibility. Poland must labour to create her own *forms* of life in accordance with her own individual ideology. She must solve all the structural and social problems in her own way. Most radical and drastic measures may be used, but they must be the outcome of Polish genius and Poland's own creative thought."

Evolutionary, and not revolutionary, ways have always been cherished by the Poles as much as the freedom of the individual. That is why the ideologies and structural forms of both her neighbours were, and are, foreign and unacceptable to Poland.



The three branches of the Service being trained for the Polish forces.
From left to right is an airman, a soldier, and a sailor



Polish Bomber

"Although three hard years of war have not sufficed to bring complete and final victory, the ever growing strength of the United Nations is a sure guarantee that the day of liberty will dawn for the oppressed people of Poland who continue to resist the enemy with such courage and devotion. In this confidence I and my people go forward with our valiant Allies into another year, more than ever resolved that liberty shall be restored to all the enslaved peoples of the world."

KING GEORGE VI

1942.

POLAND'S PART IN THE WAR

Paradoxical though it may sound, the Poles are a martial but peace-loving race. They are martial in so far as they have always taken up arms in defence of their country and in defence of the liberty of others; they are peace-loving because they have never abused their martial spirit to subjugate others, and have always fought on the side of Right for the sake of world peace. Characteristic in this regard are their two mottoes that express the entire outlook of a Pole: "Honour and Fatherland" and "For Our Freedom and Yours."

It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that Poland stood up to fight Germany which had a population three times larger, superior strength in air, and mechanised units fully mobilized. How unequal was the ranging of forces on both sides is evident from the following figures:

Poland: 22 Infantry Divisions, 8 Cavalry Brigades, 1 Motorized Brigade, 300 warplanes.

Germany: 73 Infantry Divisions, 1 Cavalry Brigade, 15 Armoured and Motorized Divisions and about 5,000 warplanes.

This was no military secret on the eve of the war, and yet Poland was the first to shout "*Wara!*" (Stand Back!) to the Germanic hordes moving like an avalanche from Central Europe.



A unit of Polish tanks in line



Polish Navy. At the Guns

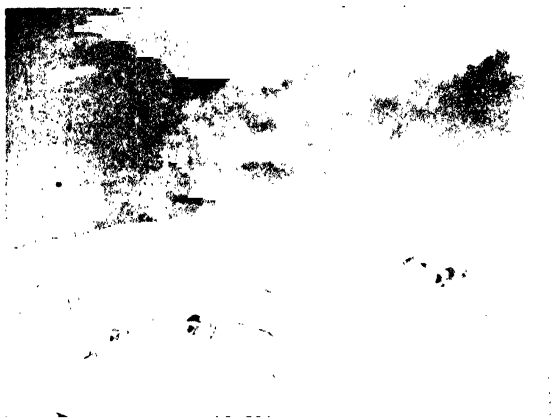
"The valuable contribution which the Poles have made to the common cause of the United Nations has not been achieved without heavy sacrifices. But these sacrifices will be crowned by the restoration, to which we all look forward, of a great and independent Poland."

WINSTON CHURCHILL
3rd May 1943.

The first chapter of the history of this second World War is no doubt brief because it closes after a period of six weeks. But it is full of events whose significance became apparent only when the conflagration in the West started after a lapse of nine months. It was then realized that Hitler's blitz was not to be trifled with, and those who had laid down their lives and sacrificed their homes and hearths for the sake of honour and freedom alone were indeed a heroic people. It was realized only then that it took the Germans no less than full nine months to lick their wounds and repair their war machines after the terrible mauling and smashing they received at the hands of Poles in the September campaign. It is thus easy to imagine the situation in the West had the Germans had an easy victory in Poland, as they had in other countries of Central Europe, and launched an offensive on the West immediately afterwards.

The resistance of Poland which lasted for over five weeks was no doubt considerably cut short by the invasion from an unexpected quarter, i.e. from the East. When all was lost hundreds of thousands of Poles left their country to continue the fight in Allied Camps against the common enemy. The Polish Navy, after a series of adventures in the Baltic, dropped anchor in the waters of Britain, and part of Poland's Air Force made its way to France.

The first Polish land forces to fight outside Poland were the Mountaineer Brigade who were drafted to Norway in April 1940, and fought at Narvik where they earned the praise of both British and French Commands. They were, however, ordered to return to France on account of the serious situation there.



POLISH INFANTRY
In Action



"We shall win and Poland will have her due place in Europe after victory is won. I want to tell you that to all of us Poland is our first ally and she shall have her share in the fruits of victory. When victory comes, Poland and Great Britain will remain for ever close friends and together we shall co-operate after the war."

HUGH DALTON

British Minister of Economic War,
September 1942.

When the second chapter of the War opened in France it was found that a trained and experienced Polish Army, 70,000 strong, was ready for action. When France capitulated after a desperate struggle of five weeks, the Poles fought to the very end. After the Battle of France the Poles had to leave for Britain, fighting bravely every inch of their way in extremely adverse circumstances. The Polish troops were sent to Scotland where they were re-equipped and re-trained for a time, and then joined their position in defence of the East coast of Britain.

The Polish Air Force arrived in Britain in June 1940. Part of it enlisted in the British squadrons, while the rest was formed into two Polish Fighter Squadrons known as Squadrons No. 302 and 303. The services of Polish airmen in the Battle of England can hardly be minimised, as figures speak for themselves. In that memorable battle Polish fighters destroyed more than 550 German aircraft for certain, 146 probably destroyed, and damaged 181. Besides this Polish airmen have consistently taken part in the raids over Germany and occupied territories, and contributed in a large measure to breaking the morale of Germans snugly hidden far inland.

The part of the Polish Navy has not been small even though the Navy itself be small in size. Polish destroyers fought at Narvik, Lofoten, Dunkirk, Calais, Dieppe and in the Battles of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. They have escorted about 360 convoys and can account for at least three enemy destroyers, several U-boats and other vessels.



Polish Infantry



Polish Commandos

"Poland went to war for a principle. There would have been every excuse for her to have done what other Continental countries did, and bow to the inevitable, and make common, if unwilling, cause with the aggressor. Both we and Russia should be eternally grateful for Poland's self-sacrifice, for she gave us both what we needed the most, and that was time."

Capt. L. D. GAMMANS, M.P.

With the outbreak of the Russo-German war a large number of Poles who were deported to the interior of Russia were organized into an army. And those who were permitted to leave Soviet territory in 1941 formed the nucleus of the vast Polish Army of the Middle East, 80,000 strong. The services of the Polish Middle Eastern Army in the North African campaign are no less than those of other Allied Forces, who fought shoulder to shoulder to eject Rommel's *Afrika Korps*. The Poles are among the victorious Allied Forces in Italy, where they are fighting bravely side by side with their comrades-in-arms.

Last but not least is the contribution of Poles who remained in their country to work underground and sap the very foundation of the "New Order in Europe." Acts of sabotage and other subversive activities in the movement of German troops to the Eastern front, and in German war factories are a daily feature in occupied Poland. The secret press keeps up the spirit and the secret transmitting station "*Swit*" keeps the world informed of the situation in the country. It is to be remembered in this connection that the underground movement in Poland is not merely sporadic subversive activities by individuals. It is an organized army under the direct control of the Directorate of Civil Resistance which is in close contact with the Polish Commander-in-Chief and the Polish Government in London. What part is played by Polish underground forces in Russian successes, and what quota they will fill in the coming invasion of the Continent, the world will know when the present cataclysm is over and Peace reigns on Earth again. And for the re-establishment of that Peace the price paid by Poland ~~is not small~~.



The Church in the Polish Camp, Kolhapur



**Polish Refugees in Kolhapur
In the Hospital**

"The House of Lords express their admiration for the steadfast, invincible spirit of the people of Poland, and protest in the name of civilization against the policy of deliberately exterminating the Polish Nation. The House of Lords give their word to heroic Poland that her sacrifices shall not be in vain, and that all those hideous crimes will be duly avenged."

RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF LORDS
ON THE 15TH OF DECEMBER, 1942.

POLISH REFUGEES

September 1939 is the beginning of probably the saddest martyrology in the history of mankind. Apart from the unspeakable horrors of the war and inhuman atrocities committed by occupants one of the features of this martyrology is that hundreds of thousands of Poles were made to wander aimlessly all over the world. The tragedy of emigration is no new thing in the history of Poland, but the mass emigration of Poles during the present war surpasses all others, as this is a forced ejection of Poles, carried out according to plan and by methods unheard of in the past.

With the German advance deeper into the country (and with the Soviet thrust from the East) a part of the population that had started moving towards the north-east, east, and south of Poland crossed the Roumanian, Hungarian, and Lithuanian borders when the Soviet Army invaded the country.

After occupying the greater part of Poland the Germans began to eject thousands of Poles from that part of the country which they annexed directly to the Reich, to the so-called General Gouvernement. Then thousands were carried off to the Reich to concentration camps and to work camps to slave for Germany. It is estimated that 1,500,000 Poles were ejected from Polish territory to the so-called General Gouvernement, 2,000,000 were carried off to Germany for forced labour and 500,000 sent to concentration camps.

The Soviet authorities after occupying the other half of Poland wanted to get rid of those elements of the population



At work

POLISH REFUGEES IN KOLHAPUR



At home

"The example of the Polish Nation under cruel oppression and the example of her Leaders and Armed Forces abroad, are an inspiration to every freedom-loving nation in the world."

ANTHONY EDEN

which they did not consider "desirable" and began to arrest and send them to the interior of Russia, mostly to Asiatic regions. Such deportations continued up to June 1941. The number of Polish citizens sent to Soviet territory between 1939 and 1941 is estimated at 2,000,000.

For those Poles who were deported to Russia, July 30th 1941 was a red-letter day, as it was the day of their freedom. In accordance with the Polish-Soviet treaty signed on that date all Poles were released from prisons and camps and they gained relative freedom of movement in the Soviet territory. When the Polish army formed in Russia left the Soviet frontier it escorted nearly 43,000 Poles, mostly women and children, out of Russia. All these evacuees arrived in Iran and found temporary refuge in that country. A part of them went to Palestine, a number of women joined the Women's Auxiliary Force. About 25,000 went to Africa, 1,500 to Mexico and about 4,000 came to India. There are about 9,000 left in Iran, and the remaining 2,000 will never return to Poland as they have found repose in the Polish cemeteries in Iran. Polish evacuees who came to India and were accorded the best of hospitality—both by the Government of India and the Indian people—are now settled mainly in two camps; about 500 children in the camp at Balachadi, Jamnagar, and over 3,000 other evacuees in the camp at Valivade, Kolhapur.

The first camp opened in India was the one at Jamnagar where orphans brought over from Russia in 1941 were placed. It is a school camp where children get their education and are trained to be fit subjects of the future Polish State.

The Camp at Valivade, Kolhapur, was built in the middle of 1943. It is virtually a small town consisting of blocks of

“My countrymen are proud of the friendship of your brave people. We shall never forget their heroic struggles and sacrifices. The way they have stood up to great suffering and privation in Poland has been an inspiration not only to the American people but to all who are engaged in the fight to keep this world a decent place to live in.”

ANTHONY BIDDLE

American Ambassador to the
Polish Government in London.

houses where each family has its modest establishment. There are also four schools for children (2 primary schools, a high school and a lycée), a church, a hospital with a dispensary, a co-operative organisation with its many workshops and stores, a cinema, clubs, a library and a reading room. Thanks to the care and protection of the Government of Poland and the active help given by the Government of India, Polish evacuees living in Kolhapur are fully provided with the means of modest material existence. They also get all facilities for their cultural and educational uplift (vocational training for adults, amateur performances, etc.), and spend their time usefully preparing themselves for their return to their country.

At Panchgani (near Poona) there is a health centre for Polish evacuees. Those who are suffering from pulmonary diseases are kept in the T. B. Sanatorium, and the convalescent and those who are weak and exhausted recoup their health in the various rest centres, preparing for the long and wearisome journey that awaits them.

Near Karachi there is also a transit camp, from where the Polish refugees are directed to various other hospitable countries to find refuge there.

POLISH RURAL LIFE

Polish peasant costumes, songs, dances, and all folk arts and crafts, were born centuries back, in the Polish villages, having a common motif but a great variety of character and expression in different provinces. They were, for some time, the exclusive property of the provinces, but in the 19th century, under the influence of new social currents, and the deeply felt need for a closer contact between all social classes, in the common effort to withstand the oppression of foreign rulers, folk art attracted the keenest interest of the intellectuals, being the direct expression of the creative Polish spirit, and a symbol of its indomitable resistance to all foreign pressure. Since that time the peasant costumes, songs, music and decorative arts have become the cherished property of the whole nation.

The influence of nature on the various Polish folk-arts was strong. The handiwork and songs of the inhabitants of the marshy Polesie, are very different from those of the highlander of the Tatra mountains. The tunes of the first are slow, plaintive, and somewhat sad ; the costumes are hand woven, out of the local flax, modestly embroidered with two-colour designs ; and footwear is prepared out of the bark of trees which is not so easily spoiled in water as leather. But the songs of the mountaineers are full of vivacity, of courage and an almost savage beauty, as wild and virgin as the hills that inspire them. The men's costumes are made of white, thick, handwoven woollen cloth, richly embroidered with all-coloured wool, and the short sheep-skin jackets, without sleeves, are often decorated with a masterly mosaic of coloured leather, or geometric and floral motifs. The brass clasps of the large belts, as well as the handles of sticks used to climb the hills, are also richly decorated, in the same way as are almost all the brass and wooden domestic utensils. The houses and cottages of the mountaineers have a peculiar style, all in wood with high roofs and sculptured doors, ceilings, etc.

The villagers on their fertile soil, west of Warsaw in the district of Lowicz, of a healthy, virile and beautiful type, are



BRIDE IN REGIONAL COSTUME

fond of the most vivid colours in their costumes and the interiors of their cottages, which are spacious, bright, full of artistically painted furniture, with coloured-paper cuttings hanging on the walls and ceiling of the hut. Their costumes are the richest and most beautiful of those of all the provinces of Poland. The women wear large, woollen, handwoven skirts, in stripes of orange, pink, green, and red. Their jackets are richly embroidered with cotton, wool, and coloured pearls. To see the typical procession at one of the great festivals of the year, many town-dwellers and foreigners would come every season to Lowicz, for it was a unique and picturesque pageant.

The costume of the inhabitants of Silesia, chiefly miners, is darker in colours, sober and dignified; that of Podolia bright and joyous; and the most popular, beloved through all Poland, regarded almost as the national dress, is that of the proud, serene and enlightened province of Cracow. Its capital, the famous city of the Polish kings, was the very heart of the country for centuries. The tunes and dances of this province are well known for their peculiar beauty, grace and vivacity. The most famous dance is called Krakowiak.

The songs, legends, tales and traditions of the Polish village have been an inexhaustible source of inspiration to the poets and writers of all schools and times. The ballads, romances and dramas of the Romantic poets of the 19th century, as well as the social and lyrical novels, poems and dramas of contemporary authors, have taken their subjects from the villagers' life and the riches of their folklore. (A novel, entitled "Peasants," by W. Reymont, gained the Nobel Prize in 1924.)

Painters and sculptors have also found a source of wonderful new motifs in folk art, and under its influence a new style has been developed, especially in wood-cuts, and stylised paintings and decorative art.

All the masterpieces of Polish music, which, however national in spirit and form, have become the common property of mankind, have also been nurtured and inspired by Polish folk-tunes. The famous Mazurkas and Polonaises of Chopin, the Preludes of Paderewski, the Opera "Halka" of



Moniuszko, and the latest masterpiece of Szymanowski, the Opera Ballet "The Mountaineers" which has been admired on the greatest stages of Europe, all have been inspired by the music and songs of the Polish peasants. It may be interesting to note that the songs of the Polish mountaineers are the only ones in Europe which have much in common with Indian music. The motifs of handwoven tissues and peasant decorations are almost identical with those of many Indian provinces. Specialists could find a mine of proofs for Mr. Coomaraswami's theory that the so-called "folk arts" are not at all "primitive" but represent the common unconscious memory of most ancient, highly developed civilisations, hence their refined exquisite beauty.

The village arts and crafts developed wonderfully with the independent life of Poland. Their charming beauty found its rightful place amongst all classes, in the home of the city dwellers as well as in the manor-houses of the gentry. Peasant motifs in rugs, earthenware, and handwoven tissues, in the styles of different provinces, have been introduced in the interior decoration, and in dress; even architecture has borrowed much from the villages. And one, the so-called "Zakopane style" (from the well-known Hill station) in wood and stone architecture as well as in engraved furniture, was unique.

Many varieties of rugs, handwoven tissues, lace, embroidery, pottery, brass and wooden inlaid and engraved objects, were to be seen not only at annual exhibitions, but almost in every house.

Fashionable ladies began to wear handspun and handwoven dresses richly and delicately embroidered.

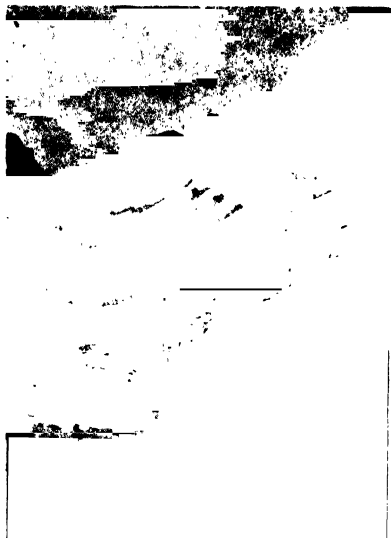
Many new schools of arts and crafts, and decorative arts, were opened; and factories of furniture, pottery, etc., under the guidance of artists who took care of the purity of style in folk motifs, designs and colours.

The twenty years of independent life, in this domain, as in many others, were marked by a splendid development and revival.

Even in their enforced, and sad war-pilgrimages, the Poles have not forgotten their peasant art, and here in India, in



**Wooden
Village
Church**



**The Tatra Mountains
Lake**



the refugee camp in Kolhapur State, they have opened a co-operative weaving workshop, and another workshop manufacturing artistic dolls, under the guidance of trained artists. Specimens of their work are to be seen at this Exhibition.

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The exhibits were partly done by the boys and girls of Polish schools of the Evacuees' Camp at Valivade, Kolhapur, India.

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POLISH DANCER

S. NORBLIN

Polish
Exhibition
Catalogue

March 28 April 7

Bombay

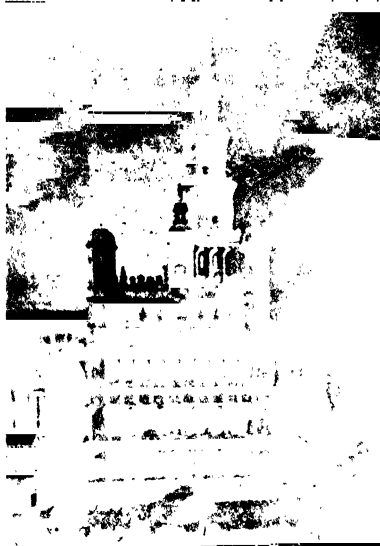
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BOMBAY 1944



The Royal Castle
Wawel in Cracow



The Town Hall of
Poznan



GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT POLAND

Poland is in the centre of Europe; its capital, Warsaw, almost mathematically so. The immediate neighbours of Poland are the two biggest military Powers of the Continent—Germany in the West, Russia in the East. The natural frontiers of Poland are the Carpathian range (its highest part is known as the Tatra mountains, the highest in Europe after the Alps), and a short Baltic shore—in the North. The length of the Polish frontiers is 3,467 miles.

As regards area (150,041 sq. miles) and population (35 millions), Poland ranks sixth in Europe. Warsaw is the 7th biggest European city. Poland is inhabited by 70% of Poles, 15% Ukrainians, 8·4% Jews, 2·5% White Ruthenians, 0·5% Lithuanians, and 0·25% Russians. About eight million Poles lived abroad before the war; four-and-a-half million in the U.S.A. When the U.S.A. entered the war, every sixth soldier was of Polish extraction. Poland's increase in population was (after Bulgaria) the highest in Europe.

Poland is one of the oldest and most cultured of the Slavonic States. During several centuries it was also the most powerful, and spiritually it remained one of the strongest till now, as the unequal fight, begun in 1939, and still continuing with unabated energy, has amply proved.

Poland, since the 12th century, had had to stand against the repeated onslaughts of the Tartars and Turks, protecting all Europe on the East; hence the title given her of "Rampart of Christianity." On the West she had had to wage defensive wars to protect her own existence, and that of Slavdom, from the steady and powerful pressure of Germany. Poland's victories in the 15th century saved all the Slavonic nations from German slavery.

Poland was, from the 14th century onwards, a constitutional monarchy. After the 16th century the King became a kind of elected President; the ruling class of the gentry was the largest in Europe, the percentage of voters—10%—was larger in Poland in the 16th century than in France in the 18th century. Democracy was in the blood of the Poles. The "constitutional principles"—personal security, security

"Ever true to her faith and to her word, Poland never undertook a war of conquest, but has struggled always for the liberty of peoples and for European civilisation."

LATE CARDINAL MERCIER
Primate of Belgium

of home and property, freedom of association, faith, speech, press, opinions—were introduced in Poland in the 15th and 16th centuries, and were never transgressed during her independent existence.

Poland was the only country in Europe which never had any religious war, where not a single creed or sect has ever been persecuted, from time immemorial till to-day. The Jews, at the time of atrocious persecution in Europe, flocked to Poland, where they enjoyed the largest measure of self-government. The Armenians, Protestants, and Greek Orthodox had always the same freedom till our days.

The first University was opened in Cracow in 1364—the second in Central Europe ; the famous Copernicus was a scholar in this University. The next was the University of Wilno.

The parliamentary system was organised in the 15th century, the Constitution "Nihil Novi" was one of the most liberal of its times, and the next one of May 3rd 1791 was the most democratic. The King could do little without the consent of the Assembly—the House of Commons—composed of Deputies elected by universal suffrage, and the Senate. The deliberations of the Assembly were open and taken unanimously. Poland had no era of absolutism or feudal system in her history ; her weakness was to have the Central Government not strong enough, and too much, not too little, of democracy. The King was the first citizen of the Republic but never an autocrat. Poland did not know what conspiracy against the King meant. The civil liberties enjoyed by the citizens were greater, in the 15th and 16th centuries, in Poland than in the neighbouring countries in the 18th and 19th. They were liked by Poland's smaller neighbours ; that is why Poland did not grow through aggressive wars, of which her history had none, but by free and voluntary

“Even a great nation may fall ; but only a worthless one can perish !”

STANISLAW STASZIC.

Famous Polish Thinker of the 18th Century

Unions—with Lithuania, Ruthenia, Duchy of Livonia, etc. Poland was in reality a Commonwealth, a federated Republic.

Economically Poland was strong and wealthy and was called the “granary of Europe.” After the fall of the Byzantine Empire, the Western merchants carried on their trade with Asia through Poland. At the end of the 16th century, Poland was the largest country in Europe.

Beginning with the 14th century, for 300 years the Turks were the greatest menace to Europe. Poland had continually to repulse their invasions. Finally, at the request of the Pope and the Emperor of Austria, the Polish King Sobieski went to the rescue and defeated them, breaking their power near Vienna in 1683. Other wars against the aggressive armies of the Swedes and Moscovites weakened Poland in the 17th and 18th centuries and, with some decline in public morality, made possible the foreign interferences in her affairs, the more so because she was unwilling to maintain large standing armies. Poland’s liberties were regarded as dangerous by her autocratic neighbours. As the Chancellor of the Russian Empress, Catherine, said in 1794: “The opinions and institutions of Poles are contagious, the infection may easily spread,” and this was dreaded by the growing imperialism of those countries. That was the reason of their attempt to introduce chaos in Poland, and to overpower her by the force of three armies. Poland was defeated in her first defence, organised by Pulaski, the future hero of the American war of liberation ; and a great part of her land was annexed by the victors. It was a tremendous shock and tragedy for the nation and stupendous internal reforms began. The first Ministry of Public Education in the world was created (1773)—the army reorganised, and a new Constitution voted, establishing the foundation of quite modern democratic principles. But this was even more resented and dreaded by the autocracies, and a second invasion and annexation of the

"Poland . . . will rise again like a rock, which may for a spell be submerged by a tidal wave, but remains a rock."

WINSTON CHURCHILL

October, 1939.

territory took place ; it was valiantly opposed by a large volunteer army, in which a considerable number of peasants and workmen took part, a thing quite new in Europe, and the lead of a heroic General Kosciuszko who also fought for the freedom of America. After several successful battles, and the famous siege of Warsaw, Kosciuszko was defeated in 1794 by the three armies of Russia, Germany and Austria and the rest of Poland was invaded and divided by the aggressor Powers. Poland disappeared from the map of Europe, but not from its cultural, scientific, artistic and spiritual life. On the contrary all these aspects of her soul rose to unprecedented heights. Patriotism became her religion, but it touched a universal love for the freedom and brotherhood of mankind, for which she was struggling and striving during the following centuries.

Three times the Poles rose in arms against the oppressors, not without momentary successes (in 1862 an underground National Government ruled for one year, in the fully occupied country, imposing taxes, having different ministries, a guerilla army, etc.), but they could not stand in spite of all their gallantry and heroism against the military force of the Great Powers.

In those times of unprecedented national tragedy, a group of the most eminent poets, thinkers, philosophers and artists, appeared in Poland bringing a great contribution to the culture of mankind—Chopin; Hoene-Wronski, scientist and philosopher recognised as having no equal since Kant in Europe, and several other original and deep philosophers ; and three geniuses in poetry and spiritual vision, Mickiewicz the greatest of all Slavonic poets, Slowacki likened to Shelley and Blake in one person, and Krasinski whose dramas were so much in advance of his age that they are quite "modern"

"During the last years the heroic and determined manner in which the Polish people have struggled and sacrificed in the face of tremendous hardships and deprivation has been an inspiration not only to the people of the United States but to liberty-loving people everywhere."

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

JULY 5, 1941.

even now. There was also a large group of less gigantic figures in poetry.

In spiritual and cultural life there was an astonishing revival of a nation which, deprived of her physical existence, had, as it were, to prove this birthright, and wage a formidable fight with fate itself, a 'to be or not to be' struggle, to regain one day her liberty and her right place in the family of nations.

No persecution, no oppression, no devilish methods used to force Poland to denationalisation, no attempts to kill her body and soul, have succeeded. The vitality and moral power of the race have proved stronger than all the crude and brutal powers used to crush it. A British historian has said : "The partition of Poland, although remote and indirect, was the essential cause of the World War ; it overthrew European equilibrium, introduced the victory of violence and the principle 'Might is Right.' Europe had to pay dearly for her indifference to the act of political gangsterism, as the power of Prussia and its militarism grew out of Poland's partitions."

Poland regained her freedom after a long preparation of her military force in youth organisations, which formed in 1914 the Legions of Pilsudski, who was one of the greatest men of Poland. It was he who helped her to regain her independence and organise her life. It was the will to be free and a tremendous effort of the nation that were chiefly responsible for Poland's freedom in 1918 ; without this will and effort no outward agent could have brought liberation.

The whole history of Poland proves what a tremendous power the moral and spiritual strength and passion for freedom are. A nation that has a will to live and to fulfil her mission to Humanity cannot be subjugated for long.

“Habitual historic cruelties practised by the German nation upon the Polish nation cannot be exaggerated and need only be recalled as another Polish claim to restoration and amends. Powerful, completely independent Poland, with wide and easy access to the sea through her own territory, is a European necessity and European commitment.”

LORD VANSITTART
September, 1943.

Poland's firm stand against Hitler's demand, her challenge of his, until then unopposed might, had also its source in the deepest belief of the whole nation, that moral values—like honour and liberty—cannot be sold for any material goods—safety, neutrality, avoidance of suffering, or even well-being.

And Poland proves it by her unabated, stubborn, grim fight against the Nazis, as well at home—where an Underground Army is half a million strong—as abroad, where Polish air-men (12,000 of them) are most gallantly fighting at the side of the Allies, and have till now destroyed 700 and damaged 900 aircraft ; where her Navy is valiantly helping on all the seas, and her Army, the fifth in number amongst the Allies, is taking now an active part in the offensive against the “European fortress” of Hitler.

Poland's rightful and constitutional Government, residing for the time being in Britain, is representative of the chief political parties of Poland ; it has 3 peasant and 3 socialist representatives ; it is in constant touch with the invaded land, and has its representative in Poland itself, under whose command the Underground Army is fighting ; the underground educational activities are going on and plans for the future are being prepared. Not even for one moment have the Poles doubted that the full integrity and independence of their country will be restored after the war.

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF FREE POLAND 1918—1939

The Armistice of 11th November, which brought peace to the rest of Europe, was for Poland the beginning of a military and diplomatic struggle for her frontiers. The Polish-Soviet Peace Treaty at Riga, March 21st 1921, and its ratification by the Conference of Ambassadors in March 1923, settling the eastern borders of Poland, have opened a new era for the country, that of the rebuilding and reorganisation of all life.

Devastated by six years of war, exhausted, ruined, with her economic, agricultural and administrative system completely disorganised, Poland faced tasks of such magnitude that they would have baffled any nation ; and we do not think any other could have done better in a shorter period of time than Poland has done. To understand the extent of the effort, to see rightly her achievements, one must bear in mind some facts.

1. Five-sixths of Poland's land were devastated by war operations, more seriously than Belgium and France. (The loss in buildings was estimated at 330 million dollars in gold, yet no reparations were allotted.)

2. Agriculture ruined : 11 million acres of land out of use ; 15 million acres of forest destroyed.

3. Industries at a complete standstill (machinery, and all other equipment taken by one or the other of the retreating occupants). The total loss of industries has been estimated at 10,000 million gold francs.

4. The monetary system profoundly disorganised : 6 different currencies in circulation, and a menace of inflation, which was soon to become a fact and to influence the next years of national economy.

5. Four different systems of administration, all greatly disorganised ; four Codes of Law ; no Constitution.

6. Chaos in education (except in the part formerly under Austria) ; 34% illiteracy in the villages of Poland ruled by Russia ; not one Polish University or Academy (except Cracow and Lwow).

7. Physical and nervous exhaustion from six years of privation, misery, persecutions and war shocks ; 20% of



Polish Shore in 1918



**The same Sea Shore In 1929
with the town and port of Gdynia**

children rickety or consumptive from lack of nourishment; unimaginable impoverishment of all classes (626,000 destitute people on State support, 750,000 orphans, 2 million unemployed).

8. The Army nearly non-existent ; the Pilsudski Legions disorganised by German prisons and concentration camps ; the troops organised in France not yet returned ; soldiers from the three armies just coming home ; no equipment, almost no arms or ammunition ; no police force.

In these conditions the existence of the reborn Polish State began. One can imagine what a tremendous amount of energy, skill, effort, self-sacrifice, goodwill and patriotism were needed to cope with the task. The Poles rose to the occasion.

In less than six months the Army was organised, and was strong enough to repulse the enemy from the frontiers.

The Constitution, voted by the Legislative Assembly, founded on the "freest and most democratic franchise possible," as an American observer has remarked, granted to all citizens, without difference of nationality, class or creed, full liberty of culture, religion, customs, and opinions. It introduced compulsory education, and general military service, to protect the country.

A Polish currency was introduced. A unified Code of Law was established, after extensive work by the best lawyers. The administration was completely reorganised ; agriculture, trade and industry revived, developing with astonishing speed ; the new Port of Gdynia was built, a poor fishing village changing in a few years into the most modern port on the Baltic Sea. A hitherto non-existent Merchant Marine, Navy and Air Fleet were created, more and more Polish products and manufactures were exported and appreciated in other countries. Every part of the economic and industrial life was renewed and reconstructed. The Central Industrial District was organised on an imposing scale.

Some figures will give an idea of the development of the country :

Mining—Poland occupied the second place in Europe in coal production which was the chief article of export ;



**Modern
Architecture**

**National
Museum in
Warsaw**



**Modern
Architecture**
**Ministry of Edu-
cation in Warsaw**



the third place in oil production.

Salt—Her rock and brine salts mines were also among the oldest and richest in Europe. In potassium salt Poland's production was the third in Europe.

Metal—Her metal industry had considerably developed; in the production of pig-iron Poland occupied the ninth place, and in the production of steel the eighth.

Textiles—The textile industry, almost entirely destroyed by the 1914-18 war, was restored and splendidly developed, chiefly in Lodz, the "Polish Manchester"—and its products were exported to England, China, Switzerland, India, etc. The chemical industry was also developed, with a considerable export trade.

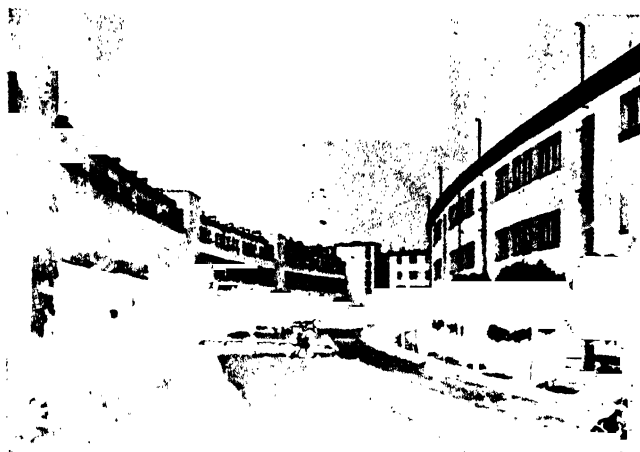
Agriculture—Poland also exported timber and many agricultural products like butter, eggs, bacon, wheat, flax etc.

Glass—Polish glassware was exported to 55 countries; paper to 10 countries.

Heavy Industries—In heavy industries, Poland exported railway engines, cars, and bars, to the Balkans and the Middle East. Eighty per cent of Polish imports and exports passed through the Ports of Gdynia and Danzig. Their respective development is seen on the charts.

Communications—Warsaw is on the communication lines from North to South, and East to West Europe. The lines of railway communications were doubled, the Polish air line, and the shipping line "Gdynia—America" founded, which had communication with 40 ports of the world.

Education was most vigorously fostered, from the first moment of independence. Fifteen per cent of the yearly budget was reserved for it. In the year 1937, 28 universities and academic schools were working; 72 teachers' training schools; 2,230 secondary, 1,030 special, 28,751 primary, and 1,651 nursery schools. Five and a half million Polish pupils were studying in 1937-39, over 50,000 of them in universities, and over one and a half million from the minorities, which had schools of their own, mostly supported by the Government. Ukrainians had 26 secondary Government Schools and many private ones, 8 teachers' training colleges, 4 commercial schools, 33 nursery and 457 primary schools in the Ukrainian lan-



Workers' Houses in Warsaw

guage, 2,754 primary bilingual schools, and in 2,123 others the Ukrainian language was an additional subject. They had a Theological Academy in Lwow, a Department of Orthodox Theology at the University of Warsaw, 5 Ukrainian Chairs at each of the universities, and many professional and technical schools. The Ukrainian cultural, scientific, social, professional and economic institutions developed swiftly, many of them assisted by the Government.

The Jews had 12 nursery,⁸⁷ primary, 2 secondary, and 14 commercial schools with the Yiddish language as the medium of instruction ; 29 nursery, 172 primary, 9 secondary and 3 teachers' colleges with Hebrew.

Illiteracy had fallen from 34 to 27 per cent in 1929, and was almost non-existent in 1938 : scientific and cultural institutions were developing splendidly in all the chief cities. In 1938 there were about 190 big scientific libraries ; innumerable were the smaller literary libraries, for Poles of all classes. Big new institutions were established, like the Radium Institute, founded by Mme. Curie-Sklodowska ; the marvellously endowed Physics Institute (both taken now to Germany with all their installations), the Institute of Research in East European Problems, the Institute for the Investigation of National Social Problems, the Institutes of Social Economy, of Rural Sociology, of Rural Culture, etc., etc. The chief Minorities of Poland had their own prospering scientific institutions : the Ukrainian Scientific Institute in Warsaw, supported by the Polish Treasury ; the Jewish Scientific Institute, and the Jewish Society for Culture and Science. Museums were opened ; about 180 scientific and academic museums, and 90 art galleries were started.

The Academy of Polish Literature was founded in 1933, and was doing, with the Polish P. E. N. Club, much good work. Literature, already rich, was continually vivified by new original and virile talent, a large part of which was feminine. Dramatic art flourished, and its standard was regarded by foreign critics as amongst the highest in Europe. Warsaw alone had thirteen permanent theatres and three schools of dramatic art and the Minorities had their own theatres supported by public funds.

The plastic arts, sculpture and architecture, as well as music, were rich in fresh and outstanding talents. One may say that every field of Poland's life was blossoming, and pulsing with creative life.

The prisons were reformed—industrial training, art, lectures and concerts were introduced. Courts for juveniles, and special clubs and schools for them, were established. Hundreds of health and physical culture centres were started, as well as hospitals; mortality gradually decreased, health and vigour improved greatly throughout the country.

In the domain of social reform much has been achieved. Poland was one of the first in Europe to introduce, by legislation, not only the 8-hour day and paid yearly vacations, but also the progressive protection of women and juvenile labour with a post of woman inspector in the Ministry of Labour. Well-organised social insurance schemes, under which no one unemployed, of the manual or intellectual working class, was without permanent help, were started. Social Aid took care of disabled youths and adults and of the poor and destitute, combating begging, prostitution, etc. Warsaw's Women Police, under the lead of a prominent, spiritually minded woman, was found the best in Europe by a League of Nations Delegate.

Co-operative Societies as well as Trade Unions developed vigorously in towns and villages. Agrarian reform was introduced and carried on by an evolutionary method, the principle of private property being safeguarded. In accordance with the Land Reform Act, six and a half million acres were parcelled out among the landless peasants, some six hundred thousand new farms being created.

But the most remarkable results were achieved in the education of the masses. Original methods were introduced in the night schools, rural universities were started for peasants (the best in Europe after Sweden and Denmark), and universities for workmen in the towns; posts of Cultural Instructors were created, helping the youth of the villages to organize and to develop freely, under their own initiative, social study-groups clubs, amateur theatres, sports, etc.

When one of our educational workers was sent abroad by the Ministry to study the corresponding institutions in other

countries, she visited nearly the whole of Europe, and found only in the then socialistic Spain and democratic Sweden the same fresh, vigorous breath of new ideas, of a new approach to the masses, based on reverence for human dignity, and confidence in the unlimited potentialities of every individual, irrespective of class and social status. Educational institutions breathing this new spirit were of tremendous value to the life of Poland. A new type of a free, nationally conscious, responsible, idealistic young citizen was developing, with a keen sense of national solidarity, proud patriotism, and at the same time interest in world affairs. It is this youth, together with the best Polish intellectuals, that is now upholding Polish honour and leading their countrymen in an unabated struggle against the Nazis.

The most interesting achievements were seen in the artistic domain. Not only has a new generation of writers, poets and novelists, from the peasant and working-classes, been born, enriching with accents of peculiar vigour and robust individuality the already rich Polish literature, but the dramas and representations used as a method of development in schools, cultural and educational institutions, and village-clubs, have proved to be the best for the Polish temperament.

The spiritual task before Poland has been best defined by one of her greatest men, Marshal Pilsudski : "We have to create a new type of man, a free yet self-disciplined idealistic citizen who could harmonise in himself the two extremes, robust independent individuality and conscious voluntary submission and co-operation with the State in full and creative responsibility. Poland must labour to create her own *forms* of life in accordance with her own individual ideology. She must solve all the structural and social problems in her own way. Most radical and drastic measures may be used, but they must be the outcome of Polish genius and Poland's own creative thought."

Evolutionary, and not revolutionary, ways have always been cherished by the Poles as much as the freedom of the individual. That is why the ideologies and structural forms of both her neighbours were, and are, foreign and unacceptable to Poland.



The three branches of the Service being trained for the Polish
From left to right is an airman, a soldier, and a sailor



"Although three hard years of war have not sufficed to bring complete and final victory, the ever growing strength of the United Nations is a sure guarantee that the day of liberty will dawn for the oppressed people of Poland who continue to resist the enemy with such courage and devotion. In this confidence I and my people go forward with our valiant Allies into another year, more than ever resolved that liberty shall be restored to all the enslaved peoples of the world."

KING GEORGE VI

1942.

POLAND'S PART IN THE WAR

Paradoxical though it may sound, the Poles are a martial but peace-loving race. They are martial in so far as they have always taken up arms in defence of their country and in defence of the liberty of others; they are peace-loving because they have never abused their martial spirit to subjugate others, and have always fought on the side of Right for the sake of world peace. Characteristic in this regard are their two mottoes that express the entire outlook of a Pole: "Honour and Fatherland" and "For Our Freedom and Yours."

It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that Poland stood up to fight Germany which had a population three times larger, superior strength in air, and mechanised units fully mobilized. How unequal was the ranging of forces on both sides is evident from the following figures:

Poland: 22 Infantry Divisions, 8 Cavalry Brigades, 1 Motorized Brigade, 300 warplanes.

Germany: 73 Infantry Divisions, 1 Cavalry Brigade, 15 Armoured and Motorized Divisions and about 5,000 warplanes.

This was no military secret on the eve of the war, and yet Poland was the first to shout "*Wara!*" (Stand Back!) to the Germanic hordes moving like an avalanche from Central Europe.



A unit of Polish tanks in line



Polish Navy. At the Guns

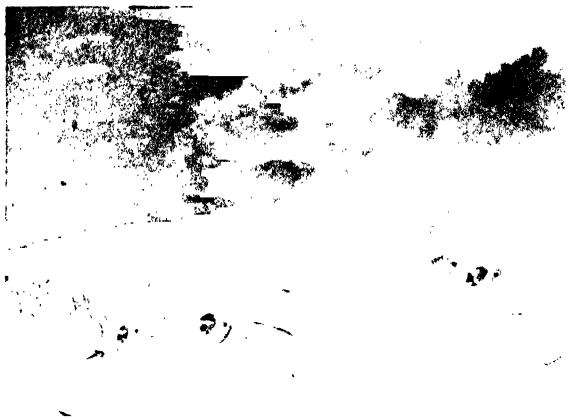
"The valuable contribution which the Poles have made to the common cause of the United Nations has not been achieved without heavy sacrifices. But these sacrifices will be crowned by the restoration, to which we all look forward, of a great and independent Poland."

WINSTON CHURCHILL
3rd May 1943.

The first chapter of the history of this second World War is no doubt brief because it closes after a period of six weeks. But it is full of events whose significance became apparent only when the conflagration in the West started after a lapse of nine months. It was then realized that Hitler's blitz was not to be trifled with, and those who had laid down their lives and sacrificed their homes and hearths for the sake of honour and freedom alone were indeed a heroic people. It was realized only then that it took the Germans no less than full nine months to lick their wounds and repair their war machines after the terrible mauling and smashing they received at the hands of Poles in the September campaign. It is thus easy to imagine the situation in the West had the Germans had an easy victory in Poland, as they had in other countries of Central Europe, and launched an offensive on the West immediately afterwards.

The resistance of Poland which lasted for over five weeks was no doubt considerably cut short by the invasion from an unexpected quarter, i.e. from the East. When all was lost hundreds of thousands of Poles left their country to continue the fight in Allied Camps against the common enemy. The Polish Navy, after a series of adventures in the Baltic, dropped anchor in the waters of Britain, and part of Poland's Air Force made its way to France.

The first Polish land forces to fight outside Poland were the Mountaineer Brigade who were drafted to Norway in April 1940, and fought at Narvik where they earned the praise of both British and French Commands. They were, however, ordered to return to France on account of the serious situation there.



POLISH INFANTRY
In Action



"We shall win and Poland will have her due place in Europe after victory is won. I want to tell you that to all of us Poland is our first ally and she shall have her share in the fruits of victory. When victory comes, Poland and Great Britain will remain for ever close friends and together we shall co-operate after the war."

HUGH DALTON
British Minister of Economic War,
September 1942.

When the second chapter of the War opened in France it was found that a trained and experienced Polish Army, 70,000 strong, was ready for action. When France capitulated after a desperate struggle of five weeks, the Poles fought to the very end. After the Battle of France the Poles had to leave for Britain, fighting bravely every inch of their way in extremely adverse circumstances. The Polish troops were sent to Scotland where they were re-equipped and re-trained for a time, and then joined their position in defence of the East coast of Britain.

The Polish Air Force arrived in Britain in June 1940. Part of it enlisted in the British squadrons, while the rest was formed into two Polish Fighter Squadrons known as Squadrons No. 302 and 303. The services of Polish airmen in the Battle of England can hardly be minimised, as figures speak for themselves. In that memorable battle Polish fighters destroyed more than 550 German aircraft for certain, 146 probably destroyed, and damaged 181. Besides this Polish airmen have consistently taken part in the raids over Germany and occupied territories, and contributed in a large measure to breaking the morale of Germans snugly hidden far inland.

The part of the Polish Navy has not been small even though the Navy itself be small in size. Polish destroyers fought at Narvik, Lofoten, Dunkirk, Calais, Dieppe and in the Battles of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. They have escorted about 360 convoys and can account for at least three enemy destroyers, several U-boats and other vessels.



The Church in the Polish Camp, Kolhapur



**Polish Refugees in Kolhapur
In the Hospital**

"The House of Lords express their admiration for the steadfast, invincible spirit of the people of Poland, and protest in the name of civilization against the policy of deliberately exterminating the Polish Nation. The House of Lords give their word to heroic Poland that her sacrifices shall not be in vain, and that all those hideous crimes will be duly avenged."

RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF LORDS
ON THE 15TH OF DECEMBER, 1942.

POLISH REFUGEES

September 1939 is the beginning of probably the saddest martyrology in the history of mankind. Apart from the unspeakable horrors of the war and inhuman atrocities committed by occupants one of the features of this martyrology is that hundreds of thousands of Poles were made to wander aimlessly all over the world. The tragedy of emigration is no new thing in the history of Poland, but the mass emigration of Poles during the present war surpasses all others, as this is a forced ejection of Poles, carried out according to plan and by methods unheard of in the past.

With the German advance deeper into the country (and with the Soviet thrust from the East) a part of the population that had started moving towards the north-east, east, and south of Poland crossed the Roumanian, Hungarian, and Lithuanian borders when the Soviet Army invaded the country.

After occupying the greater part of Poland the Germans began to eject thousands of Poles from that part of the country which they annexed directly to the Reich, to the so-called General Gouvernement. Then thousands were carried off to the Reich to concentration camps and to work camps to slave for Germany. It is estimated that 1,500,000 Poles were ejected from Polish territory to the so-called General Gouvernement, 2,000,000 were carried off to Germany for forced labour and 500,000 sent to concentration camps.

The Soviet authorities after occupying the other half of Poland wanted to get rid of those elements of the population



At work

POLISH REFUGEES IN KOLHAPUR



At home

“The example of the Polish Nation under cruel oppression and the example of her Leaders and Armed Forces abroad, are an inspiration to every freedom-loving nation in the world.”

ANTHONY EDEN

which they did not consider “desirable” and began to arrest and send them to the interior of Russia, mostly to Asiatic regions. Such deportations continued up to June 1941. The number of Polish citizens sent to Soviet territory between 1939 and 1941 is estimated at 2,000,000.

For those Poles who were deported to Russia, July 30th 1941 was a red-letter day, as it was the day of their freedom. In accordance with the Polish-Soviet treaty signed on that date all Poles were released from prisons and camps and they gained relative freedom of movement in the Soviet territory. When the Polish army formed in Russia left the Soviet frontier it escorted nearly 43,000 Poles, mostly women and children, out of Russia. All these evacuees arrived in Iran and found temporary refuge in that country. A part of them went to Palestine, a number of women joined the Women's Auxiliary Force. About 25,000 went to Africa, 1,500 to Mexico and about 4,000 came to India. There are about 9,000 left in Iran, and the remaining 2,000 will never return to Poland as they have found repose in the Polish cemeteries in Iran. Polish evacuees who came to India and were accorded the best of hospitality—both by the Government of India and the Indian people—are now settled mainly in two camps ; about 500 children in the camp at Balachadi, Jamnagar, and over 3,000 other evacuees in the camp at Valivade, Kolhapur.

The first camp opened in India was the one at Jamnagar where orphans brought over from Russia in 1941 were placed. It is a school camp where children get their education and are trained to be fit subjects of the future Polish State.

The Camp at Valivade, Kolhapur, was built in the middle of 1943. It is virtually a small town consisting of blocks of

“My countrymen are proud of the friendship of your brave people. We shall never forget their heroic struggles and sacrifices. The way they have stood up to great suffering and privation in Poland has been an inspiration not only to the American people but to all who are engaged in the fight to keep this world a decent place to live in.”

ANTHONY BIDDLE
American Ambassador to the
Polish Government in London.

houses where each family has its modest establishment. There are also four schools for children (2 primary schools, a high school and a lycée), a church, a hospital with a dispensary, a co-operative organisation with its many workshops and stores, a cinema, clubs, a library and a reading room. Thanks to the care and protection of the Government of Poland and the active help given by the Government of India, Polish evacuees living in Kolhapur are fully provided with the means of modest material existence. They also get all facilities for their cultural and educational uplift (vocational training for adults, amateur performances, etc.), and spend their time usefully preparing themselves for their return to their country.

At Panchgani (near Poona) there is a health centre for Polish evacuees. Those who are suffering from pulmonary diseases are kept in the T. B. Sanatorium, and the convalescent and those who are weak and exhausted recoup their health in the various rest centres, preparing for the long and wearisome journey that awaits them.

Near Karachi there is also a transit camp, from where the Polish refugees are directed to various other hospitable countries to find refuge there.

POLISH RURAL LIFE

Polish peasant costumes, songs, dances, and all folk arts and crafts, were born centuries back, in the Polish villages, having a common motif but a great variety of character and expression in different provinces. They were, for some time, the exclusive property of the provinces, but in the 19th century, under the influence of new social currents, and the deeply felt need for a closer contact between all social classes, in the common effort to withstand the oppression of foreign rulers, folk art attracted the keenest interest of the intellectuals, being the direct expression of the creative Polish spirit, and a symbol of its indomitable resistance to all foreign pressure. Since that time the peasant costumes, songs, music and decorative arts have become the cherished property of the whole nation.

The influence of nature on the various Polish folk-arts was strong. The handiwork and songs of the inhabitants of the marshy Polesie, are very different from those of the highlander of the Tatra mountains. The tunes of the first are slow, plaintive, and somewhat sad ; the costumes are hand woven, out of the local flax, modestly embroidered with two-colour designs ; and footwear is prepared out of the bark of trees which is not so easily spoiled in water as leather. But the songs of the mountaineers are full of vivacity, of courage and an almost savage beauty, as wild and virgin as the hills that inspire them. The men's costumes are made of white, thick, handwoven woollen cloth, richly embroidered with all-coloured wool, and the short sheep-skin jackets, without sleeves, are often decorated with a masterly mosaic of coloured leather, or geometric and floral motifs. The brass clasps of the large belts, as well as the handles of sticks used to climb the hills, are also richly decorated, in the same way as are almost all the brass and wooden domestic utensils. The houses and cottages of the mountaineers have a peculiar style, all in wood with high roofs and sculptured doors, ceilings, etc.

The villagers on their fertile soil, west of Warsaw in the district of Lowicz, of a healthy, virile and beautiful type, are



BRIDE IN REGIONAL COSTUME

fond of the most vivid colours in their costumes and the interiors of their cottages, which are spacious, bright, full of artistically painted furniture, with coloured-paper cuttings hanging on the walls and ceiling of the hut. Their costumes are the richest and most beautiful of those of all the provinces of Poland. The women wear large, woollen, handwoven skirts, in stripes of orange, pink, green, and red. Their jackets are richly embroidered with cotton, wool, and coloured pearls. To see the typical procession at one of the great festivals of the year, many town-dwellers and foreigners would come every season to Lowicz, for it was a unique and picturesque pageant.

The costume of the inhabitants of Silesia, chiefly miners, is darker in colours, sober and dignified; that of Podolia bright and joyous; and the most popular, beloved through all Poland, regarded almost as the national dress, is that of the proud, serene and enlightened province of Cracow. Its capital, the famous city of the Polish kings, was the very heart of the country for centuries. The tunes and dances of this province are well known for their peculiar beauty, grace and vivacity. The most famous dance is called Krakowiak.

The songs, legends, tales and traditions of the Polish village have been an inexhaustible source of inspiration to the poets and writers of all schools and times. The ballads, romances and dramas of the Romantic poets of the 19th century, as well as the social and lyrical novels, poems and dramas of contemporary authors, have taken their subjects from the villagers' life and the riches of their folklore. (A novel, entitled "Peasants," by W. Reymont, gained the Nobel Prize in 1924.)

Painters and sculptors have also found a source of wonderful new motifs in folk art, and under its influence a new style has been developed, especially in wood-cuts, and stylised paintings and decorative art.

All the masterpieces of Polish music, which, however national in spirit and form, have become the common property of mankind, have also been nurtured and inspired by Polish folk-tunes. The famous Mazurkas and Polonaises of Chopin, the Preludes of Paderewski, the Opera "Halka" of



MOUNTAINEER FROM THE TATRA REGION

Moniuszko, and the latest masterpiece of Szymanowski, the Opera Ballet "The Mountaineers," which has been admired on the greatest stages of Europe, all have been inspired by the music and songs of the Polish peasants. It may be interesting to note that the songs of the Polish mountaineers are the only ones in Europe which have much in common with Indian music. The motifs of handwoven tissues and peasant decorations are almost identical with those of many Indian provinces. Specialists could find a mine of proofs for Mr. Coomaraswami's theory that the so-called "folk arts" are not at all "primitive" but represent the common unconscious memory of most ancient, highly developed civilisations, hence their refined exquisite beauty.

The village arts and crafts developed wonderfully with the independent life of Poland. Their charming beauty found its rightful place amongst all classes, in the home of the city dwellers as well as in the manor-houses of the gentry. Peasant motifs in rugs, earthenware, and handwoven tissues, in the styles of different provinces, have been introduced in the interior decoration, and in dress; even architecture has borrowed much from the villages. And one, the so-called "Zakopane style" (from the well-known Hill station) in wood and stone architecture as well as in engraved furniture, was unique.

Many varieties of rugs, handwoven tissues, lace, embroidery, pottery, brass and wooden inlaid and engraved objects, were to be seen not only at annual exhibitions, but almost in every house.

Fashionable ladies began to wear handspun and handwoven dresses richly and delicately embroidered.

Many new schools of arts and crafts, and decorative arts, were opened; and factories of furniture, pottery, etc., under the guidance of artists who took care of the purity of style in folk motifs, designs and colours.

The twenty years of independent life, in this domain, as in many others, were marked by a splendid development and revival.

Even in their enforced, and sad war-pilgrimages, the Poles have not forgotten their peasant art, and here in India, in



**Wooden
Village
Church**



**The Tatra Mountains
Lake**



the refugee camp in Kolhapur State, they have opened a co-operative weaving workshop, and another workshop manufacturing artistic dolls, under the guidance of trained artists. Specimens of their work are to be seen at this Exhibition.

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The exhibits were partly done by the boys and girls of Polish schools of the Evacuees' Camp at Valivade, Kolhapur, India.



POLISH DANCER

S. NORBLIN

